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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Sixth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Africa

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 10-17 November 1986

PROGRESS REPORT ON THE OBSERVANCE OF 1986 AS «YEAR OF CARTOGRAPHY IN AFRICA»

1. The Fifth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Africa (UNRCCA) which was held in Cairo, the Arab Republic of Egypt, from 28 February to 7 March 1983 adopted its Resoltuion 13 (V) which, among other things:

(a) Recommended «that all African countries intensity their efforts towards the standardization of geographical names in their respective countries»;

(b) Requested « the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), in collaboration with the African Association of Cartography, to sensitize member States through the organization of seminars in each of the existing divisions and to assist African member States which have not yet set up national geographical names committees to do so.»

2. The ECA Conference of Ministers, at its 229th meeting, held at the Commission's headquarters in Addis Ababa on 2 May 1983, endorsed the report ot the 5th United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Africa (UNRCCA) and all the resolutions contained therein and, by

virtue of operative paragraph 7 of its Resolution 476 (XVIII) 1/,declared 1986 as «The Year of Cartography in Affica » The proclamation was further endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly late in 1984. In 1984, the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) conveyed the message in the first part of the operative paragraph of the resolution of the ECA Conference of Ministers, to the Secretary-General of the Organiation of African Unity (OAU) for the implementation of the OAU Council of Ministers. Subsequently, the Forty-First (41st) Ordinary Session of the OAU Council of Ministers, held in Addis Ababa, from 25 February to 5 March 1985, adopted Resolution CM/Res.983 (XLI) 2/ declaring 1986 as the «Year of Cartography in Africa».

3. Following these actions and, in order to ensure effective administrative and technical preparations for the activities to mark the Year, the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa and the Secretary-General of the OAU, formally ratified in June 1985, the appointment of a Regional Organizing Committee whose composition is as follows:

Chairman:	Mr. M'Funi Tshiamanyanu, Director of ESCAS Department,(OAU)
Co-Chairman:	Mr. Funso Olujohungbe, Chief, Cartography & Remote Sensing Unit (ECA)
1st Vice-Chairman:	Dr. Chedly Fezzani, Secretary-General of the African Association of Cartography (AAC)
2nd Vice-Chairman:	Mr. Asfaw Fanta, General Manager, Ethiopian Mapping Agency
Member:	Mr. B. Kabiyona, Secretary-General, African Remote Sensing Council (ARSC)
Member:	Mr. J. Abla, President, Commission for Geodesy in Africa
Secretary:	Mr. E. Kasaija Nyakana, Cartographic Affairs Officer (ECA)

1/ See Annex 1

2/ See Annex 2

4. The Committee, among others, was charged with responsibilities that will lead to the attainment of the following goals:

(a) establishment of national cartographic institutions where they do not exist as a positive step in implementing and achieving the objectives of the Lagos Plan of Action;

(b) strengthening of national surveying, mapping and remote sensing departments, as well as all other institutions engaged in resources development and conservation;

(c) improvement of cartographic literacy among all nationals;

(d) arousing the awareness of all citizens of the need to identify, locate precisely, develop, conserve, rationally utilise and protect from greed and unreasonable external exploitation of our natural resources endowment;

(e) education of our young generation in the appropriate methods of surveying and mapping as an input into other fields of study and research aimed at judicious exploitation and development of our natural resources; and

(f) more importantly for our planners and decision-makers to allocate adequate financial resources to surveying and mapping, including remote sensing in their national budgets.

Activities of the Regional Organizing Committee for the Year of Cartography in AfRica

5. In pursuance of its mandate, the Committee held its inaugural meeting on 7 June 1985 at which it took the decision that each member Government of the OAU and ECA should be urged to set up National Committees to undertake such activities as they considered worthwhile to commemorate auspiciously the Year. Each National Committee, whose composition was left to the discretion of the government concerned, was expected among other undertakings, to:

(a) implement resolution 476 (XVIII) of the ECA Conference of Ministers and resolution CM/Res. 983(XLI) of the OAU Council of Ministers proclaiming 1986 as the Year of Cartography in Africa (YCA-86);

(b) Serve as a focal point for the activities of the Regional and National Organizing Committees for the Year;

(c) Formulate and be responsible for the organization of the activities drawn up for the commemoration of the Year; and

(d) Conduct publicity campaigns at global and continental level.

6. From the time of the inaugural meeting to end of March 1986, the Committee held two other meetings which were devoted exclusively to mapping out strategies that would bring home to the general public, decision and policy-makers alike the message of the Year which is «Cartography and Remote Sensing for Development in Africa».

7. On 27 March, 1986, the General Secretariat of the Organization of African Unity, sent notes verbales (ESCAS/EA.12/336.86) to the Ministers of Foreign/External Affairs of all member States either through their missions in Socialist Ethiopia or directly, inviting their attention to the Resolutions 476 (XVIII) and CM/Res.983 (XLI) of the ECA and OAU Conference of Ministers respectively on the Year of Cartography in Africa and calling upon them to establish effective collaboration with the Economic Commission for Africa Executive Secretary to ensure the success of the activities for the Year as well as a realization of the intended objectives.

8. At its meeting on 5 May 1986, the Regional Organizing Committee, in addition to reviewing steps that had been taken towards the commemoration of the Year at regional and national levels, mapped out a programme of work to ensure its maximum impact and success, and also approved the text of an Africa-wide joint press release by the OAU Secretary-General and the ECA Executive Secretary. On 9 May 1986, the Year was officially and auspiciously launched in the office of the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity through the joint press release which was subsequently given a wide publicity throughout Africa.

9. In July 1986, the secretariat of the Economic Commission for Africa sent circular letters to all the Heads of Survey Institutions/Departments of the African Governments, urging them to get personally involved in the organization of their national committees which were commissioned to line up befitting activities to mark the Year.

10. The programmed activities of the Regional Organizing Committee were only partially achieved because of the financial crisis which hit the United Nations and which resulted in serious curtailment of planned missions to assist some national committees in enhancing their performance. Notwithstanding this setback, full advantage had been taken of the few missions that were undertaken to member countries such as Popular Republic of Benin, Republics of Mali, Kenya and Nigeria, Burkina Faso, and Kingdom of Swaziland to appeal strongly to the heads of the Survey and Mapping Organizations to make a success of the Year by engaging in worthwhile activities within their means. Noteworthy among such missions were three (two to the Regional Centre for Services in Surveying, Mapping and Remote Sensing, Nairobi, Kenya,)and the third to the Regional Centre for Training in Aerial Surveys , Ile-Ife (Nigeria) at which the Executive Secretary of the ECA himself urged the representatives of the contracting member States attending the meetings of the Governing Council's of the two Centres to ensure that their Governments establish, without further delay, national committees and celebrate, under an atmosphere of pomp and pageantry, the «Year of Cartography and Remote Sensing for Economic Development in Africa». Worthy of mention also is the communication which reached the secretariat of the Economic Commission for Africa from the Secretary-General of the African Association of Cartography that regular contacts were maintained with members of the Association, in particular those in the North African sub-region, to do everything possible to justify the event.

11. Although national committees were requested to submit to the secretariat of the Conference reports on their activities (on-going and/ or planned) no response was received as at the time of writing this report.

This report concerns mainly the activities of the Regional Organizing Committee in so far as the implementation of the aforementioned resolutions are concerned and, therefore, is without prejudice to other summary reports which representatives of member States here present at this Conference might wish to render.

ANNEX 1

476 (XVIII) Development of cartographic services in Africa

The Conference of Ministers,

Having considered the report of the Fifth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Africa, held at Cairo, Egypt, from 28 February to 7 March 1982 and the resolutions adopted by the Conference,

Conscious of the urgent need to strengthen cartographic institutions in the member States as the services required of them constitute the bedrock for the exploration and inventorying of their national resources,

Noting with satisfaction that the resolutions of the aforementioned Conference are consistent with the tenets of the Monrovia Strategy for the economic development of Africa and the Lagos Plan of Action,

Mindful of the crucial role which modern space geodesy plays in the accurate and rapid fixation of control points which are basic to the preparation of maps and charts and which in turn are the pre-requisites for effective planning and execution of development projects,

Bearing in mind that United Nations Regional Cartographic Conferences for Africa provide a forum for the transfer of the technology essential for the development of cartographic capabilities as well as for facilitating the exchange of experience including assisting the Economic Commission for Africa in the formulation of its programme of work,

1. Endorses the report of the Fifth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Africa and the resolutions contained therein;

2. Requests the Executive Secretary to convene the Sixth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Africa in 1986 and requests the Economic and Social Council to establish systematic and effective collaboration with the Economic Commission for Africa in order to provide budgetary backstopping in the organization of future regional cartographic conferences;

3. Invites member States which are yet to render their full support to the regional centres for cartography and remote sensing to do so, thereby justifying their faith in technical co-operation among African countries;

4. Calls upon the Executive Secretary to:

(a) Collaborate with the African Association of Cartography to undertake an assessment of the training requirements of each member State in the various fields in cartography as recommended in resolution 6 (V) of the Fifth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Africa;

(b) Publish a directory of cartographic training centres in Africa which would form a basis for possible regionalization of certain national cartographic centres;

5. Urges member States to give moral, political and material support to the African Doppler Survey project and to make available all relevant data at their disposal for the establishment of regional and subregional African geodetic data banks;

6. Requests the Executive Secretary to encourage member States and interested bodies to give financial support to the Regional Centre for Services in Surveying, Mapping and Remote Sensing for the execution of the African Doppler Survey project;

7. Endorses in particular resolution 13 (V) of the Fifth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Africa on the declaration of a year for cartography in Africa, and accordingly declares 1986 as «The Year of Cartography in Africa»;

8. Further requests the Executive Secretary to convene during 1986 a meeting of all regional and subregional organizations in Africa with responsibility for surveying, mapping and remote sensing matters with a view to harmonizing their strucutre so as to ensure their viability and effectiveness.

229th meeting

2 May 1983.

ANNEX 2

CM/RES.983 (XLI) Resolution on the Year of Cartography in Africa

The Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity meeting in its 41st Ordinary Session in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 25 February to 5 March 1985,

Having noted that cartography and remote sensing techniques are the bedrock of a planned economy and form the basis for natural resources inventory, exploration, exploitation and rational utilization which are the essential ingredients for the dynamic, economic and social development of Africa,

Mindful of the urgent need to take positive actions towards the strengthening of national cartographic and related institutions through provision of the required budgets and recognition:

1. NOTES with satisfaction the steps already taken by the ECA Conference of Ministers to proclaim 1986 Year of Cartography in Africa;

2. ENDORSES the principle behind the declaration of the Year of Cartography by the African Association of Cartography and, accordingly, proclaims 1986 as the « Year of Cartography in Africa»;

3. REQUESTS the Secretary-General a.i. of the OAU to establish effective collaboration with the Executive Secretary of the ECA with a view to ensuring the success of activities for the Year and to take necessary actions that will ensure the realization of the intended objectives;

4. URGES Member States to give all necessary support to regional and national organizing committees as well as to activities planned for the commemoration of the Year of Cartography in their respective countries.